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ABSTRACT

A study examined university students' beliefs about the availability and content of Spanish courses designed for heritage speakers. Subjects were 50 students in three classes at Arizona State University and the University of Arizona, who were administered a questionnaire on student demographics, prior Spanish language instruction or instruction in Spanish, and attitudes about SHS (Spanish for Heritage Seakers) offerings, course level, desired course content, and what they would change or add to the existing program. Most of the respondents were born in the United States, and most learned English literacy first. Eighty percent attended American public schools, but few spoke English before entering the system, and only nine respondents received any SHS instruction. Two-thirds felt SHS instruction should be offered as early as possible in the educational experience; some feared this might interfere with acquisition of English. Grammar was clearly the main area of student interest, followed by formal language usage. Culture and history were also considered important. Topics considered to be of minor importance included art, literature, politics, and Chicano language. (Contains 32 references and the questionnaire). (MSE)

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An Investigation of Student Opinions and Educational Experiences in Spanish for Heritage Speakers at Arizona State University and the University of Arizona

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While many studies have looked at language programs which serve heritage speakers of that language, it is less common to find documentation of the opinions of the students in those programs. The research on attitudes of this population often investigates opinions toward language varieties and their speakers. The purpose of this study is to examine students' beliefs regarding educational options for Spanish for Heritage Speakers (SHS). This is especially important since a program which concurs with the perceived needs of students can best serve that population. One of the most frequently discussed questions in regards to SHS instruction is when such courses should be offered. There is disagreement about the appropriate level as well as the amount of time which should be devoted to such courses. Secondly, many curriculum developers have debated the content of these courses. They often refer to teaching "standard" language as opposed to regional varieties spoken in the area of instruction. This paper will first discuss these two issues in general with reference to both research and popular opinion. Following that brief outline is a discussion of the study we conducted through questionnaires at Arizona State University and the University of Arizona. The paper concludes with a discussion of the results we obtained.

INTRODUCTION

While many studies have looked at language programs which serve heritage speakers of that language, it is less common to find documentation of the opinions of the students in those programs. The research on attitudes of this population often investigates opinions toward language varieties and their speakers (Ornstein, 1982; Galindo, 1995). The purpose of this study was to examine students' beliefs regarding educational options for Spanish for Heritage Speakers (SHS). This is especially important since a program which concurs with the perceived needs of students can best serve that population. One of the most frequently discussed questions in regards to SHS instruction is when such courses should be offered. There is disagreement about the appropriate level as well as the amount of time which should be devoted to such courses. Secondly, many curriculum developers have debated the content of these courses. They often refer to teaching "standard" language as opposed to regional varieties spoken in the area of instruction. This paper will first discuss these two issues in general with reference to both

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research and popular opinion. Following that brief outline is a discussion of the study we conducted through questionnaires at Arizona State University and the University of Arizona. The paper concludes with a discussion of the results we obtained.

HISTORY OF SHS COURSES

Spanish for heritage speakers (SHS) courses have seen immense growth over the past twenty years as the numbers of Spanish speakers enrolled in schools in the United States have greatly increased (Merino & Samaniego, 1993; Rodríguez Pino & Villa, 1994). SHS courses differ from traditional Spanish language courses in that in regular language courses, the goal is language acquisition. In SHS courses, the goal is to refine already existing language skills. In elementary schools, the teaching of SHS focuses primarily on the acquisition of a child's first language as an academic language. English as a second language is also introduced as part of the instruction in Spanish (Cummins, 1981; Merino, Trueba, & Samaniego, 1993). SHS in secondary schools has traditionally been considered to be an extension of teaching Spanish as foreign language (Valdés-Fallis, 1974). Often courses in at least one other content area (other than formal language) of the "required curriculum, anthropology, government or multicultural education" are also offered (Merino, Trueba, & Samaniego, 1993). The two main approaches with older learners at high school and college levels are "the limited normative approach" which centers on correcting "errors" in the variety of Spanish spoken in the student's community (Rodríguez Pino & Villa, 1994; Valdés-Fallis, 1978) and the "comprehensive approach" which aims to increase the students' language skills through literacy (Valdés, Lozano, & García-Moya, 1981).

The traditional approach for teaching rural nonstandard speakers in the Spanish speaking world has been the limited normative approach (Merino & Samaniego, 1993; Valdés-Fallis, 1978). In this approach, the most common features of nonstandard dialect are chosen and then contrasted with the standard forms, and oral and written exercises emphasizing their use are provided for practice. Errors are most commonly made up of dialectal differences that are not considered to be part of the systematic dialect variation of educated native speakers in that region.

From 1945-1960 the SHS course at New Mexico State University (NMSU) was titled "Corrective Spanish," and the course description stated that this course was for "Spanish American students only. Especially designed for those who speak Spanish, but who need drills in grammar, reading and diction *to correct errors common to New Mexican Spanish*." In 1962 the title changed to "Remedial Spanish," and the description remained the same but dropped the part about correcting errors. In 1968 the course title changed to "Spanish for Spanish Speaking Students," and the description read "For Spanish speaking students only. Exercises in grammar, speech correction and vocabulary building." Finally in 1975, "speech correction" was dropped from the course description (Rodríguez Pino

& Villa, 1994). The book *Español para el Bilingüe* (Barker, 1972) was developed in the United States as a result of the limited normative approach in the attempt to assist the Heritage speaker of Spanish (HS) in learning "correct" Spanish. Barker's approach suggested direct error correction and emphasized that dialectal differences are structures to be avoided. This approach seemed to separate HS students from their own Spanish-speaking communities as it often tended to lessen the value of their parents' language (Faltis, 1984).

As a result of Labov's study of black English varieties in the United States (1972) and of Chicano linguists' descriptions of *Chicano Spanish* (Sánchez, 1972), the comprehensive approach was introduced (Valdés-Fallis, 1974). This approach uses the standard variety of Spanish as the medium of instruction and of sharing ideas about topics of interest to the students (Faltis & DeVillar, 1993). It is suggested that if bilingual students are provided with instruction on skills and practice in speaking, reading, and writing about a variety of topics, they will develop standard Spanish. Textbooks have been written in accordance with the comprehensive approach for use in SHS courses to promote literacy skills in standard Spanish by providing opportunities to speak, read, and write about topics of interest to students (Valdés-Fallis & Teschner, 1984; Valdés, Hannum & Teschner, 1982). The comprehensive approach attempts to extend students' skills in Spanish in a natural way and is based on Krashen's (1981) theory of second language acquisition which emphasizes the content of the utterance rather than the correctness of the form being used. Further, it attempts to create a linguistic awareness that helps students recognize formal levels of Spanish while simultaneously introducing instruction in the four skills and grammar. This instruction is generally designed to meet the *specific* needs of Hispanics in the United States (Hidalgo, 1993).

Faltis (1990) notes that although the limited normative and comprehensive approaches differ significantly, both encourage learning *about* the language before using it for communicative purposes and both are based on a teacher-centered knowledge base. Faltis (1990) suggests that the student should have an active role in the learning process rather than a passive role as is implied in teacher-centered courses (see also Faltis & DeVillar, 1993).

Many public schools and universities cannot afford to offer SHS courses or lack the specialized personnel to offer them. In 1993, SHS courses could be found at Florida Internationaľ University, Arizona State University, The University of Arizona, The University of New Mexico, New Mexico State University, and The University of Texas at El Paso (Hidalgo, 1993), and it is likely that SHS courses are offered now at other institutions.

CONTENT OF SHS COURSES

It is probable that students in SHS courses at universities will receive instruction based on the comprehensive approach (Hidalgo, 1993). In addition to formal language instruction and the four skills, activities in the SHS classroom should be

relevant to the students' interests and goals and to life in their Spanish speaking communities (Sánchez, 1981). Once the goals and objectives for SHS courses are established, textbooks and approaches used in these courses should be selected to reflect those goals and to encourage attainment of them. Sánchez (1981) points out that SHS courses may be the only places where Hispanic students can go to discuss topics that standard university courses never address.

One important variable in determining student needs in SHS courses is when they first received instruction in Spanish geared towards HS's. Although we believe that bilingual education is especially important at all levels of education, the reality of American public schools does not reflect this. If students have received adequate instruction at earlier levels, they may be more interested in learning historical and cultural aspects of Spanish speaking communities, whereas if they have not received language instruction they may be more likely to expect to learn basic language skills. Because of this, it will be interesting to see if our study reveals different foci as a result of prior instruction and educational opportunities.

PLACEMENT IN SHS COURSES

According to D'Ambruoso (1993), in universities, Heritage speakers of Spanish are not automatically placed in SHS courses because they can understand and speak a little Spanish or because they have a Spanish name. These students should exhibit advanced linguistic ability in Spanish. Once in the SHS courses, students are grouped according to their needs, and courses are suggested for each group (D'Ambruoso, 1993). Students are generally satisfied with the realization that they are refining their knowledge of Spanish similarly to how they refine their English skills. SHS courses help students appreciate their language and culture as part of their identity, and this helps students develop positive self-esteem (D'Ambruoso, 1993). Some researchers even believe that without a command of one's own language, ethnic identity and the feeling of belonging to a group are virtually impossible (Trueba, 1993).

STANDARD LANGUAGE

While it is clear that SHS programs and funding have grown in recent years, there is still a great uncertainty about what the curriculum for these programs should include. One current topic of discussion is whether 'standard' language or regional varieties should be taught. Some activists have charged that neglecting the regional variety adds to its already diminished status. Since both popular belief and many academics support the instruction of 'standard' language in SHS classes, it is important to evaluate how this distinction arose. After a discussion of how attitudes towards Latin American Spanish as non-standard arose, we will evaluate what differences actually exist. The discussion will focus on Mexico and Mexican-American Spanish when possible since this is relevant for the population which we surveyed. Not only are the features of Mexican-

American Spanish important but also the definition of the "Standard" to which it is being compared will be investigated. Finally, this section concludes with a discussion of the implications of these differences on college teaching of Spanish to Native Speakers.

HISTORICAL ORIGINS OF ATTITUDINAL DIFFERENCES

Although theoretical linguists such as Chomsky base their work on the linguistic knowledge of the ideal speaker in a homogeneous speech community, sociolinguists have shown that for every language there are many speech communities, none of which is truly homogeneous (Wolfram, 1991). Within speech groups, speakers may vary their language use according to certain personal features such as gender and social class as well as to certain contextual features such as the formality of the situation. Since the recognition of such variation, many researchers have attempted to document the varieties of Spanish spoken in Latin America and evaluate whether they are really so different from the Castilian Spanish of Spain.

The investigation of Latin American Spanish dates back to the conquistadors of the 1500's. Since these explorers brought Spanish with them to the new world, they were responsible for determining the language base in Latin America. Hidalgo (1990) points out that since there was a high proportion of bureaucrats and nobles included in the colonizing groups, they most likely brought a language base very similar to that considered 'standard' on the Iberian Peninsula. In fact, due to the desire to establish themselves as the upper class in the New World, settlers frequently imposed the same rigid standards of language in order to assert their position of power. This was reinforced by the then popular belief that Spanish was the language spoken by those who "conquered, read and believed in God" (Hidalgo, 1990). Thus, language was a tool for social power and the language spoken in Latin America was nearly identical to and certainly as "proper" as that spoken in Spain.

Despite the fact that there was little actual difference in the languages spoken on the two continents, attitudes of those in Spain were often disparaging towards those who lived in the less civilized New World. This is shown in the quotation below:

"It has been assured for centuries that the language of peasants, common persons or the vulgo is corrupted language. Because it was also assumed that the Conquest was an enterprise undertaken by the vulgo (peasants, soldiers, sailors), the ideas that there were many Latin American vulgar dialects - similar to the vernaculars spoken in the Roman Empire - circulated widely in Spain" (Hidalgo, 1990, p. 52)

Thus, the attitude that there exists "standard" Spanish and substandard Spanish is not a new one. Latin America finds itself in a strange position of wanting to maintain the tradition of pure written Spanish while struggling to show its independence through empowerment of its own varieties. The desire to maintain the standard form of the language is seen in the establishment of the Academies in Latin

America which are modeled after Spain's Royal Academy. As a result of these academies, each country does have certain features which are specific to that area while maintaining the basic features common to all Spanish speakers. More importantly, while there are clear differences between Latin American Spanish and Castilian Spanish, it is also important to note that educated people from all Spanish speaking communities have many characteristics in common and do not differ so much from each other as they do from the lower class in each of their respective countries (Lope Blanche, 1983).

CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF MEXICAN-AMERICAN SPANISH

As shown above, all Spanish speaking countries have more in common with each other than they have significant differences. Since this is the case, it is important to ask the question: Is there really any difference at all? The purpose of this section is to discuss the actual features which characterize Chicano Spanish because there are in fact certain variations which do describe speech in the Southwest.

In terms of phonological variation, the characteristic which best characterizes Latin American Spanish is the change from pronunciation of /c,z/ as /ø/ to /s/. This, however, is not particular to Mexican-American Spanish. In fact, nearly all Spanish speakers in the Americas share this feature. Hidalgo (1987) and Sánchez (1983) cite other characteristics as regional variations such as reduction of diphthongs (*pues* as /pos/), diphthongization of *hiatos* (*día* as /dja/), and the simplification of consonant clusters (*doctor* as /dotor/). Both reductions and simplifications are found in many informal varieties.

There are also examples in the works cited above of morphological variation. Among these is the addition of the letter *-s* which is generally associated with the second person singular form, to the second person singular form in the preterit where it is not necessary (i.e. *dijistes* vs. *dijiste* 'you said'). This shows a trend for generalization which is common in nearly all languages. Another characteristic is the substitution of the letter *n* for the letter 'm' in the first person plural forms of the imperfect tense. This change is also intuitive since the pronoun for the first person plural is *nos*.

Syntactic variation is also found in Mexican-American Spanish, although less frequently than other types of variation. One example of language change in progress is that Chicano Spanish is shifting the way in which it distinguishes its two verbs which mean 'to be' (*ser* and *estar*). What is interesting about this is that it is *estar* that is being used more frequently than *ser*. If influence of English were responsible for this change it would be more logical that *ser* be the more popular form since it is more similar in form to English. This is seen in the forms 'is' and *es* which both have the same meaning. This similarity has been used to explain why second language speakers of Spanish transfer English and thus overgeneralize the form *ser* to a number of inappropriate contexts at early stages of development (VanPatten, 1987).

A final type of variation which can characterize many different varieties of Spanish is lexical variation. Due to the influence of Native peoples, the Spanish of Latin America includes many words which come from native languages like Nahuatl spoken by the Aztecs. Many plants, vegetables and food items have different names in many countries. One example of a word which comes from Nahuatl is 'chocolate.' Clearly this word has made its way into many regions and many languages other than Spanish and is not particular to Mexico.

Another source of lexical variation is the contact that Mexican-American speakers of Spanish have with English and American culture. One example of this type of influence is the addition of the word 'lonche' to the Spanish lexicon. This is not a simple borrowing, nor is it evidence of the replacement of the Spanish word by an English one since the original word for 'lunch' in Spanish, 'almuerzo', can be used to refer to a large mid-day meal. Although English does influence some aspects of Chicano Spanish, it is important to note that many of the variations previously described can be explained by processes such as generalization and reduction which are common in many languages and in Spanish where there is no contact with other languages.

DEFINING STANDARD

Given the historical origin of language attitudes, and the fact that the variation found in Chicano Spanish is not as great as its similarities with other varieties, it is clear that both those who support and criticize the instruction of standard varieties in SHS classes need to define standard before their recommendations are meaningful. One reason that standard is so difficult to define is that it is often compared to or defined with respect to other varieties. In fact one of the most commonly perceived definitions of standard is the variety of the region which has risen to a position of prestige as a result of trivial linguistic differences but significant power issues. One difficulty with this is that the differences between certain varieties of one language such as Chinese are greater than the differences between certain languages like Swedish and Danish which are considered to be different languages (Hidalgo, 1987). Thus, we lack a concrete definition for variety and this does not help to define what standard language is.

A second problem with the above definition of standard is that, in the case of Spanish, the definition of standard may be more related to economic status than to regional variables. This means that educators need to be clear about whether it is the region or the social class that is stigmatized. Furthermore, the definition of standard needs to be explicit for each program which states this as one of its goals. In addition, curriculum developers need to be aware of the judgments they are making when they use the term standard. Fromkin and Rodman (1983) define Standard American English as an idealized variety. They say, "Nobody speaks this dialect, and if somebody did we wouldn't know it because Standard American English isn't defined precisely" (p. 251).

As with English, there is no clear definition of standard and so each curriculum plan which includes this notion must be specifically explained.

IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS

Despite the fact that standard is not well defined, it is a central issue for educators. The sociolinguistic meaning behind this term is language which is not stigmatized. Thus, teaching a standard variety is based on the acknowledgment that there are attitudes associated with certain salient language features. Among those who support the teaching of a standard variety are those who claim that standard speech is useful to improve a student's chances at occupational and general success. Some who make this claim take the traditional view that they need to purge students of varieties which are not standard. This is justified by claiming that the prestige variety is the common communicational vehicle for art, literature, science and technology. This group claims that non-standard varieties have restricted daily functions which hinder its use in the fields mentioned above (Hidalgo, 1987).

Since the above argument resembles the debate against bilingual education, this opinion may not serve the Hispanic population as it should. In fact, Ammon (1977) showed that for Swabian speakers (in southeast Germany), the imposition of the standard variety and a total disregard for the home variety is more academically, economically and psychologically detrimental than it is beneficial. Nevertheless, there are others who have suggested that the standard language be used in a variety of ways which may be more beneficial.

One such suggestion, supported for Black students by linguists such as Labov, Shuy and Wolfram, is the use of bidialectal education. Under this type of curriculum, both the standard variety and the regional variety are used in class. The rationale for this type of approach is similar to that which supports L1 literacy for children: It is harmful to halt development by imposing a new way of communicating and students benefit from continued use of their native tongue while they work to add a second language/variety. Hidalgo describes this approach by saying that "students are made aware of style and register appropriateness and when they begin to write they are taught which forms are peculiar to casual rapid speech and which are accepted in writing." (p. 381). This approach does not discourage communication while it does enhance the development of the more formal speech norms.

Other characteristics of bidialectal education involve the content of the courses offered at the university. In addition to the register awareness mentioned above, students are taught the origins of the regional differences and made aware of which regional differences are accepted by educated speakers in that area. This is important because it acknowledges both social class and region and does not confound the two. Hidalgo (1987) also suggests that merely increasing the literacy level of students and maintaining a conservative mode of speech will cause students to learn how to use new

variations without harming their own progress linguistically and psychologically. She suggests that a text-oriented class will be especially beneficial for these reasons.

One other recommendation is especially relevant in light of the features of Chicano Spanish described above. That is, it is not necessary to include all of the differences discussed above in the curriculum. For example, with the exception of pointing out which phonological peculiarities create problems for spelling, pronunciation should not be the key focus of the class. This seems valid since in English, pronunciation is usually considered regional and it is morphological information which is more indicative of social variables. In addition, it is not necessary to focus on lexical items since according to Hidalgo "lexical items may create confusion but don't necessitate focus since they are rarely stigmatized" (p. 389). Although we are aware of some lexical items which are stigmatized (i.e., *no más* instead of *solo*), for the most part this advice seems sound. Paying less attention to lexical items frees time to focus on morphological variations, which are apparently highly stigmatized and also very important for writing.

Bidialectal education, when considered in conjunction with these recommendations, can make use of standard language without the requirement of a universal definition. It is also able to account for both economic and regional variation. This is because this methodology would focus on certain aspects of standard language while encouraging use of the variety with which students are already familiar. In contrast with the "eradication" view, this type of approach is more in tune with research on bilingual education.

THE STUDY

The purpose of our study was to investigate student opinions regarding the two issues discussed above: availability of SHS courses and their content. The questionnaire used to illicit information from students is included in the appendix. The first questions ask for information such as gender, age, first language and place of birth. The next group of questions established from what generation the speakers of Spanish derived and how many of their family members spoke Spanish to them. Finally, a series of questions aimed at determining what the subjects' prior experience with SHS courses had been was included. These questions asked subjects to tell when they had received instruction in Spanish, at what levels and for which academic subjects. While none of this information is the focus of the study, it is important in order to group subjects and assess similarities. This class of information enables us to generalize among groups within the students in SHS courses. It may also help to explain any disparities in student opinions which are found.

The questions which followed were aimed at attaining information relevant to the two areas of interest in this investigation. Not only were subjects asked to respond to whether they felt SHS courses should be offered, they were also asked to respond to questions about the level at

which these courses should be offered (item 20). They were asked to explain why they felt this was appropriate. The answers to this item constitute the basis for discussion of the first issue. Subjects were also asked what they felt should be included in SHS courses (item 21). They were asked to respond by selecting from a list of possible curriculum options and then explain which of those was the most important (item 22). We did not include the term *standard* among these choices since the discussion above demonstrates that many conflicting definitions exist. Instead we included *grammar* and *formal language* and also allowed subjects to write in other choices. The hope was that the term *grammar* would coincide with students' perception of morphological and syntactic issues and that *formal language* might correspond with lexical and discourse information. Finally, subjects were asked what they liked most about the SHS program and what they would like to change or add. We considered this question another way to elicit information about the students' opinions of SHS offerings and content.

METHOD

We administered the questionnaire described above to two classes at the University of Arizona and one at Arizona State University. Two courses were beginning language courses, and one was a literature course for future bilingual teachers. Because of the continuing battle which sometimes surrounds the funding for SHS programs, we were not able to gain access to additional classes. In the past, class observations and interviews have been distorted and used to threaten the security of this program. As a result, many instructors are protective of their classes and their students. The SHS instructors were asked to give the questionnaire to students in class and give them time to complete each question. The questionnaires were then returned to us. The researchers were never in contact with the subjects and thus neither the purpose of the investigation nor the items of interest were discussed with participants. All questionnaires were completed within a two week period during the month of October, 1996. The total number of subjects from the University of Arizona was twenty-nine and the total number from Arizona State University was twenty-one.

RESULTS

The first portion of the questionnaire provided information on students' characteristics and home language background. The results from the Arizona State University and the University of Arizona are shown in separate columns. The information from some questions has been grouped into a single figure so the table does not match the questionnaire directly. Table 1 provides important information for interpreting further data.

Of the data presented above certain characteristics seem to be noteworthy. For example, thirty-six of the fifty subjects were born in the United States. Since many people oppose funding for SHS classes on the basis of their perception that students in those courses are not US

Table 1
Subject Variables

Characteristics	Arizona State	Univ. of AZ.
Total number of subjects	21	29
Number of females	10	20
Average age	19.6	26.4
Range of ages	18 to 26	17 to 57
Subjects born in the United States	11	25
Born in Spanish-speaking countries	10	4
Spoke English as L1	2	6
Wrote English as L1	14	22
Spoke Spanish as L1	18	20
Have a diffe ent L1	0	1-Chinese
Both parents are HSs	18	18
One parent is HS	3	9
Neither parent is HS	0	2 - Guam./Chin.
All four grandparents are HSs	19	20
Three grandparents are HSs	1	1
Two grandparents are HSs	1	6 Ar., It., Fr.,NA.
One grandparent is HS	0	1
No grandparents are HSs	0	1 - Chin.

Note: Students who cited speaking both English and Spanish as L1 not included.

citizens, this is a very important statistic. Of all subjects, only eight spoke English before they entered school. In contrast, thirty-six subjects learned to write in English first. One surprising fact is that while thirty-six subjects had two NS parents, only thirty-nine had four NS grandparents. This is surprising since a generational model of assimilation would predict that the number of students with four NS grandparents would be much higher than the number with two NS parents.

The next set of data represents the subjects' educational experience. They were asked to explain when they began attending American public schools and at what point, if any, they received instruction in Spanish which was appropriately geared towards Heritage Speakers. The section of the chart which shows how many students received some sort of instruction for Heritage Speakers in public schools is the combination of information from a few questionnaire items. This information is shown below in Table 2.

Table 2 shows that eighty percent of our subjects (40) attended American public schools. Of those students, only eight spoke English before entering the school system.

Table 2
School History

Characteristics	Arizona State	Univ. of AZ
Attended US schools for all grades	18	22
US schools after elementary school	0	2
Other	1- after 2nd grade 1- after 4th grade	1-after 3rd grade 1-Am. Catholic
Knew English before school	6	11
Knew only Spanish before school	7	10
Knew some English and Spanish	8	8
Received some instruction for HSs	4	5
Subjects taught in Spanish outside language classes:	Math, Religion, English, History	Art, P.E., Geography

Despite the possible demand for instruction in Spanish and for bilingual education, demonstrated by the groups of students in Table 2 who were monolingual in Spanish before school or who knew only some English, only nine of our subjects actually received any type of SHS instruction. This shows a large pool of potential students for education in Spanish in the school systems who did not receive this such instruction. This may have important implications for the second portion of the questionnaire where subjects are asked for their opinions regarding SHS courses.

The third section of the questionnaire was designed to access information about subjects' opinions regarding when SHS instruction should be offered. Subjects were asked to decide when the earliest point for this instruction should be and explain their answers. The results from this section are shown in Table 3.

Table 3 shows that thirty-three of the subjects, two-thirds of the entire group, felt that SHS instruction should be offered as early as possible. The reasons they give are similar to many research findings. Some examples are that it isimportant to nurture the homelanguage in order to ensure success, bilingualism is an advantage for all students, and success in L1 is necessary in order to achieve success in L2. Although no subject opposed offering SHS courses at any point, fifteen of the subjects felt that it would be better to offer SHS instruction at a later point. Some of the reasons for this were fear of confusion, and fear of failure to acquire English adequately thus leading to problems later in life. Taken in their strictest form, these opinions seem to oppose research findings and support certain popular

Table 3
What Is the Earliest SHS Courses Should be Offered?

Level	ASU	UofA	Sample Comments
elementary	11	22	(ASU)friends speak Spanish; success in school more likely; become "useful" citizens; already familiar with Spanish; correct "bad grammar" early; associate with home language and culture early;(UofA)bilingual is an advantage; build on what students already know early; easier to learn young; more years of practice; nurture what is learned at home; learn native language in order to succeed in L2; student population becoming more diverse--necessary for achievement
middle	4	5	(ASU)already fluent in English;learn English correctly first;(UofA)grow up more and can handle two languages; conflict at earlier stages; crucial time in learning; most interested in learning; acquire formal skills
high	5	0	(ASU)already know English; have to know English to get by in the US can learn Spanish later
college	1	0	(ASU) other schools aren't financed for it earlier

convictions. These opinions do, however, express one important point: that if instruction in English is not as good as that in Spanish then students will suffer educationally. It seems possible to accommodate their concerns while still offering earlier instruction in Spanish.

Table 4 shows subject opinions about what should be taught in these courses. As mentioned earlier, the results may be influenced by the fact that few of these students received SHS instruction before college. The table shows which subjects students felt should be included and which they thought were most important. The column marked 'priority' represents responses to the question, "Which of the topics selected above are most important?"

The results above show that grammar is clearly the main area of interest of these subjects. The second most important subject area is formal language. Thus, as we predicted, these topics coincide with the morphological and lexical features mentioned by Hidalgo (1987). These are the areas which are considered most salient by these subjects and thus the ones they would like to correct in order to be more successful after college in the job market. Culture and History were also considered important getting ten and nine votes

Table 4
What Should be Taught and What Is Most Important?

	Arizona State		Univ. of AZ.	
Subject	Should teach	Priority	Should teach	Priority
grammar	21	11	27	16
the arts	15	0	19	0
history	21	7	25	2
literature	19	0	24	3
culture	20	3	26	7
politics	12	0	18	0
formal lang.	20	4	27	10
Chicano lang.	13	0	15	0
Other	2-all subjects		2-sciences 1-native lang. 1-math	
comments:				-Pochismo is the first lang. that should be corrected -formal lang. is important in the real world

respectively. It is likely that if these students had received morelanguage instruction at earlier levels they would be more interested in these topics. The topics that were not considered to be of primary impor-tance were art, literature, politics and Chicano language. This is interesting since they comprise a large portion of the curriculum where this study was conducted. Perhaps earlier instruction that focused on language form would allow students to focus on topics such as art and politics at the college level.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate student attitudes in regards to SHS courses provided at the University level. Our questionnaire provided information about subjects' backgrounds, educational histories and their opinions about when SHS courses should be offered and what they should teach. While there are some subjects who do not agree with the trends presented in this data, there are clear patterns among subjects. One third of the subjects were born in the United States but went to public schools knowing only Spanish. They did not receive SHS/bilingual instruction.

They believe that SHS courses should be offered as early as elementary school and that formal language instruction with a focus on grammar should be the priority of the curriculum. What is important about these results is that they confirm what other researchers have shown and thus research results may be applied to better serving this community of students.

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APPENDIX - THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Hello! We are interested in learning your opinions about language instruction. Please fill out this questionnaire with as much information as possible. If there is something else you would like to add in addition to answering the questions, please feel free to do so. Thank you very much for your help. ¡Le agradecemos!

1. How old are you?
2. What is your gender?
3. What course are you enrolled in?
4. Where were you born?
5. What is the first language you learned to speak?
a. English b. Spanish c. Other _____
6. What is the first language you learned to write?
a. English b. Spanish c. Other _____
7. What language do you speak with your family at home?
a. English b. Spanish c. Other _____
8. What is the first language your mother learned to speak?
a. English b. Spanish c. Other _____
9. What is the first language your father learned to speak?
a. English b. Spanish c. Other _____
10. What is the first language your father's mother learned to speak?
a. English b. Spanish c. Other _____
11. What is the first language your father's father learned to speak?
a. English b. Spanish c. Other _____
12. What is the first language your mother's father learned to speak?
a. English b. Spanish c. Other _____
13. What is the first language your mother's mother learned to speak?
a. English b. Spanish c. Other _____
14. Did you attend American public schools?
a. no

b. yes, all grades
c. yes, but only for elementary school
d. yes, after elementary school
e. other _____

15. Did you know English before entering kindergarten?
a. no
b. yes, very well
c. yes, some words
d. yes, a few words

16. Were you ever given instruction in Spanish in public school?
a. no
b. yes when I first entered
c. yes in all grades
d. yes in middle school and high school
e. yes in high school

17. Was the instruction above geared towards native speakers of English?
a. no my classes were only for Heritage Speakers
b. yes, nearly all students spoke only English
c. yes, but there were other Heritage Speakers in my classes

18. Besides language skills, what other subjects were you taught about in Spanish (i.e. history)?

19. Was this instruction part of a Spanish class?

20. When is the earliest that a Spanish for Heritage Speakers course should be offered?
a. elementary school
b. middle school
c. high school
d. college/university
e. never

Why? _____

21. What should be taught in SHS courses? (Check all that apply)
_____ grammar
_____ the arts (music, dance, art, etc.)
_____ history
_____ literature
_____ culture
_____ politics
_____ formal language
_____ Chicano language
_____ other (give examples) _____

22. Of all of the choices listed above, which is the most important?

23. What do you like best about the Spanish for Native Speakers program here and what would you like to change or add to the program?